

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 PORT L 00339 181238Z  
ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01  
INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15  
USIA-06 HA-05 AID-05 TRSE-00 /081 W  
-----043306 191110Z /14

R 171019Z MAR 78  
FM AMEMBASSY PORT LOUIS  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7387  
INFO AMEMBASSY ANTANANARIVO  
AMEMBASSY LONDON  
AMEMBASSY PARIS  
AMEMBASSY VICTORIA  
CINCPAC  
CINRUSNAVEUR  
COMIDEASTFOR

C O N F I D E N T I A L PORT LOUIS 0339

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: PINT PINS PGOV PDIP PEPR SOPN EAID IN FR JA UR CU US MP  
SUBJECT: MAURITIUS WEEKLY REVIEW - MARCH 17 - SUMMARY

REF: (A) PORT LOUIS 0305 (DTG 100932Z MAR 78)  
(B) PORT LOUIS A-23, MARCH 17, 1978

1. SETTING THE STAGE FOR THE COUNTRY'S TENTH ANNIVERSARY OF INDEPENDENCE CELEBRATIONS, THE PRIME MINISTER MOVED ON MARCH 10 TO END THE STATE OF EMERGENCY WHICH HAD BEEN IN EFFECT SINCE DECEMBER 1971. THOUGH ALMOST ALL OF THE FUNDAMENTAL CONSTITUTIONAL FREEDOMS WERE RESTORED IN DECEMBER 1973, FOLLOWED BY THE ENDING OF PRESS CENSORSHIP AND THE REMOVAL OF BANS ON PUBLIC MEETINGS IN OCTOBER 1976, THE STATE OF EMERGENCY HAD BEEN A LEGAL REALITY AND THE SUBJECT OF CRITICISM FROM THE OPPOSITION MAURITIAN MILITANT MOVEMENT (MMM).

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2. THE INDEPENDENCE CELEBRATIONS WERE MARKED BY THE PRESENCE OF SEVERAL OFFICIAL FOREIGN GUESTS, THE MOST IMPORTANT OF WHOM WAS THE INDIAN FOREIGN MINISTER, VAJPAYEE. THE U.S. RECEIVED CONSIDERABLE AND FAVORABLE PRESS COVERAGE WITH THE VISIT OF THE FOUR-SHIP U.S. NAVY TASK GROUP, COMMANDED BY REAR ADMIRAL COUNTS. THE PRESENTATION TO A MAURITIAN

CHILDREN'S CLINIC OF HOSPITAL EQUIPMENT AND MEDICAL SUPPLIES BROUGHT BY THE SHIPS WAS POPULARLY RECEIVED, AS WAS THE TRANSPORT BY ONE OF THE SHIPS OF 3,200 COCONUTS FROM DIEGO GARCIA TO RODRIGUES FOR A REFORESTATION PROJECT. TWO FRENCH NAVY SHIPS AND A JAPANESE ICEBREAKER WERE ALSO IN PORT FOR THE INDEPENDENCE CELEBRATIONS.

3. A PUBLIC OPINION POLL CONDUCTED IN EARLY MARCH BY THE NEWSPAPER LE MAURICIEN REVEALED THAT WHILE PRIME MINISTER RAMGOOLAM IS STILL THE MOST POPULAR POLITICIAN ON THE ISLAND, HE AROUSES MORE ANTIPATHY THAN DOES MMMM LEADER BERENGER, AND, IN ADDITION, RAM'S POPULARITY HAS DROPPED BY 8 POINTS SINCE A SIMILAR POLL IN MAY 1977. BERENGER'S POPULARITY HAS RISEN 10 POINTS IN THE PAST YEAR. AS FOR THE THREE MAJOR POLITICAL PARTIES, THE POLL INDICATED THAT THE MMM HAS HELD ITS OWN. THE LABOR PARTY AND THE MAURITIAN SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY (PMSD) APPEAR TO HAVE LOST, TOGETHER, A GOOD MANY OF THEIR FORMER VOTERS, WITH ANET SLIPPAGE OF 9.5 PERCENT FROM THESE TWO PARTIES TOWARD THE MMM. THE IMAGE OF CERTAIN FOREIGN COUNTRIES REMAINED SIMILAR TO THE FINDINGS OF THE MAY 1977 POLL. THE U.K., FRANCE, INDIA, THE SYCHELLES, AND THE U.S. HAVE THE MOST FAVORABLE IMAGES, WITH CHINA, LIBYA, CUBA AND THE USSR BEING VIEWED UNFAVORABLY BY A MAJORITY OF THOSE POLLED.  
KEELEY

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NOTE BY OC/T: TELEGRAM DELAYED IN TRANSMISSION.

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NNN

## Message Attributes

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**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
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**Disposition Date:** 20 Mar 2014  
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**Review Markings:**  
Sheryl P. Walter  
Declassified/Released  
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**Markings:** Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014